

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-31 are pending in this application. The Examiner has allowed claims 1-23. The Examiner has rejected claims 24-29 and objected to claims 30 and 31. Applicant has canceled claim 30 and amended claims 24 and 31. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of pending claims 24-31.

The Examiner has rejected claim 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kobayashi in U.S. Patent No. 4,775,974. Applicant has amended claim 24 to include subject matter from claim 30, which the Examiner stated would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant submits claim 24 is in condition for allowance.

The Examiner has rejected claims 25-27 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kobayashi in U.S. Patent No. 4, 775,974 in view of Tzeng in U.S. Patent No. 6,438,135. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Regarding claim 25, Applicant notes claim 25 depends from claim 24. As Applicant contends claim 24 is in condition for allowance, Applicant also contends claim 25 is in condition for allowance.

Regarding claims 26 and 27, Applicant notes claims 26 and 27 depend from claim 25. As Applicant contends claim 25 is in condition for allowance, Applicant also contends claims 26 and 27 are in condition for allowance.

The Examiner has rejected claims 28 and 29 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kobayashi in view of Yoshioka et al in U.S. Patent No. 6,163,861. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Regarding claims 28 and 29, Applicant notes claim 28 depends from claim 24 and claim 29 depends from claim 28. As Applicant contends claim 24 is in condition for allowance, Applicant also contends claims 28 and 29 are in condition for allowance.

The Examiner has allowed claims 1-23. The Examiner has objected to claims 30 and 31 but states they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant has canceled claim 30. Applicant has amended

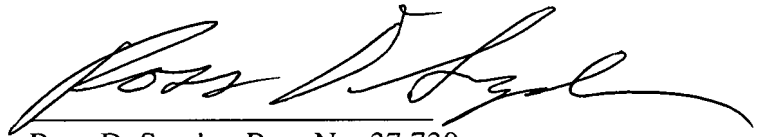
claim 31 to depend from claim 24. As Applicant contends claim 24 is in condition for allowance, Applicant also contends claim 31 is in condition for allowance.

In conclusion, Applicant has overcome all of the Office's rejections, and early notice of allowance to this effect is earnestly solicited. If, for any reason, the Office is unable to allow the Application on the next Office Action, and believes a telephone interview would be helpful, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

Date

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